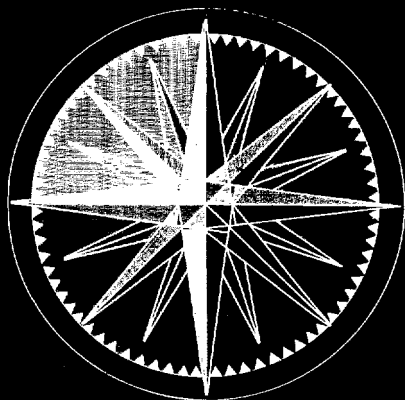


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KENYA'S FIGHT AGAINST SUBVERSION

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
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KENYA'S FIGHT AGAINST SUBVERSION

The resignation last month of Kenya's pro-Communist vice president, Oginga Odinga, marked a significant landmark in the country's political development. When the former British colony became independent in December 1963, it faced most of the problems encountered by all new African countries: a rapidly growing population with extravagant expectations, modest economic resources, and keen tribal rivalries. In addition, antagonism between the Africans and the European and Asian minorities threatened quickly to disrupt the economy. Hope rested largely in the hands of Jomo Kenyatta, then prime minister, who was acclaimed by all Africans in the country as their national hero.

However Odinga, his principal lieutenant, was already the main channel for the covert supply of foreign Communist funds, and was soon to receive arms as well. Odinga's resignation culminated a 14-month effort by Kenyatta and a group of moderate leaders to eliminate the threat he posed. However another threat stemming partly from the tribal rivalries exploited by the Odinga faction could appear when and if the present governing alliance breaks down. The absence of an agreed successor to Kenyatta adds to the uncertainties for the future.

The Setting

On independence, Kenyatta headed an uneasy tribal alliance, the Kenya African National Union (KANU), which was the more powerful of the two political parties then existing. KANU was dominated by the two largest and most politically active of the country's 40 tribes: Kenyatta's Kikuyu and Odinga's Luo. Kenyatta's reputation as leader of the Mau Mau insurgency a decade earlier, the consideration he earned during nine years of detention by the British, and his role in presiding over the final

steps to freedom lent him a status unmatched among most Africans, but contributed to the unease of the economically important European and Asian communities. His ability to manage the day-to-day problems of an independent government remained to be tested.

Odinga, the leader of the Luo, was the only other figure with a strong popular following. Apart from his tribal position, he had established a power base largely through astute dispensing of Communist funds and scholarships supplied by both

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Moscow and Peking. An estimated 1,000 or more men in reasonably important positions in the government, civil service, and trade unions owed personal allegiance to Odinga, who either had sent them to study in Communist countries or supplied them with regular financial aid. Several key members of Parliament owed their elections to him.

Odinga's bitterest opponent has been the 36-year-old Tom Mboya, now minister of economic planning and development. Although Mboya is also a Luo, his constituency is in Nairobi and he finds his greatest strength among the new, urbanized African "proletariat." A former head of the Kenya Federation of Labor and Kenya's first minister of labor, Mboya has labor backing which is the foundation for his political success. However, his Western connections exposed him to charges of UK-US domination and, together with driving ambition and arrogant manner, have earned him many personal enemies. Kenyatta, without ever completely trusting Mboya, has nevertheless recognized his brilliance and has used his abilities to negotiate the independence constitution with Britain and to draft and guide subsequent amendments through Parliament. As secretary general of KANU, Mboya has also served Kenyatta by masterminding much of the campaign against Odinga.

After becoming prime minister in 1963 Kenyatta endeavored

to create a feeling of national purpose to override the traditional tribal rivalries that had always plagued his country. His first cabinet was a skillful balance of tribal representation and KANU factions. However, Odinga, as vice president of KANU and minister of home affairs, acted as he pleased, placing leftist supporters where he wanted them, running roughshod through the domains of other ministers, and frequently presenting Kenyatta with accomplished facts which the latter was unwilling or unable to reverse. Odinga's appointments and largesse often favored the Luo.

For a long time Kenyatta tried to remain above the factional and tribal disputes within his government. Even after his "kitchen cabinet," Kikuyu loyalists with whom he had associated since Mau Mau days, convinced him that Odinga was becoming a threat to Kikuyu hegemony, Kenyatta refrained from direct action for fear of losing the support of the Luo and precipitating a tribal struggle.

When Kenya became a republic in December 1964, however, Kenyatta as new President took his first move against Odinga. He moved Odinga up to the new vice presidency where he enjoyed less real authority and no right of automatic succession. At the same time Kenyatta moved his fellow Kikuyu into the key cabinet posts.

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Odinga's influence nevertheless spread, his organization grew, and he was widely regarded as Kenyatta's heir apparent. By exploiting the discontent of the masses and the frustrations of the backbenchers in Parliament Odinga lieutenants had built a sizable following by early 1965 among the important Kamba tribe which dominates the military, and even a faction of the Kikuyu, in addition to the Luo. They appeared to have substantial support in Parliament and although they were a minority in the cabinet, they were setting the pace there. While Kenyatta and his senior ministers remained silent and inactive in the face of growing unrest and disunity in the country and increasing opposition to the government, a number of second- and third-echelon leaders began to coalesce into what eventually became known as the Kenya Group (KG).

The Moderate Alliance

These younger, progressive leaders were disturbed by the effectiveness of Communist propaganda and the failure of the country's leadership to present any effective resistance to Odinga's bid for power. Many of them were being undermined in their own constituencies and feared that Odinga would pick them off one by one. They felt that the apathy and divisiveness of the older ministers were permitting Odinga to capture the party by default. Their initial discussions were limited to plans for working together and

supporting each other in their own constituencies against Odinga's attacks. As the discussions continued, the group began to assume shape and direction, attracting other energetic, constructive elements of varying tribes, all anxious to unite against the common danger--Odinga.

In late February 1965 while the KG was still in early gestation the Odinga political forces received a crippling blow--the assassination of P. G. Pinto, a dedicated Communist and their principal brain and paymaster. It has never been determined who was responsible for his liquidation, but following this loss Odinga's power eroded steadily.

Two months later, in April 1965, the KG moved into action. Parliament's defeat of two Odinga-backed candidates for legislative offices impressed Kenyatta with the opposition to Odinga. A parliamentary debate on arms smuggling from Communist countries further revealed the pent-up resentment toward the extremists. When the army seized a cache of Communist-supplied arms in the basement of Odinga's office, Kenyatta finally seemed to realize the seriousness of Odinga's threat. As coup rumors swirled around Nairobi and British troops stood by at his request, Kenyatta for the first time openly attacked an Odinga lieutenant--as it happened a Kikuyu whose disloyalty challenged Kenyatta's authority in tribe as well as government.

In a rapid succession of events, Kenyatta sent back a

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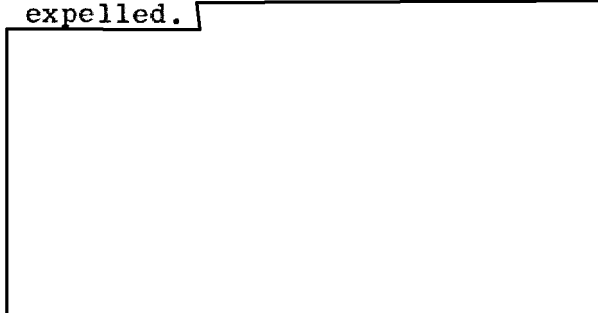
shipment of arms supplied by Moscow under terms humiliating to Kenya, and Parliament approved government take-over of the new Soviet-supported Lumumba Institute, which Odinga had helped establish as a political training center for KANU cadres of his own selection. A KANU party convention, at which the KG hoped to force a direct confrontation, was postponed for nearly a year, however, as Kenyatta gradually restricted the extremists while trying to preserve tribal balance and unity. When the convention was finally held last March, the victory was sealed. Steamroller tactics planned and executed by Mboya and a few KG members removed all the extremists from party office. Odinga, who had been the single party vice president, refused to run for one of seven regional vice presidencies established under a revised party constitution. A month later on 14 April, Odinga resigned from both government and KANU to form an open opposition party. Following his course were some 30 members of Parliament, including the minister of information and two assistant ministers. Kenyatta moved forcefully to prevent Odinga's new Kenya People's Union from gaining momentum. Police kept Odinga's men under surveillance, and seized the passports of many. Odinga men were purged from local KANU organizations. In Odinga's home district all party officials have been replaced. Probably most effective has been a hast-

ily passed constitutional amendment to the effect that legislators who quit the party which had sponsored their election must vacate their seats and seek re-election. By the time the amendment passed half the dissidents had requested reinstatement in KANU, but Kenyatta intends to enforce party discipline by having them stand for re-election anyway.



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Kenyatta has also acted to cut off Odinga's external financial support. Eleven Communist diplomats and newspapermen known to have funneled funds to Odinga have been expelled.



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Back at the Ranch

The moderates' evident victory, at least for the short term, over the subversive threat may allow attention to revert to some of Kenya's more basic problems. Most Kenyans have received few tangible benefits from independence, and the government has been unable to meet their minimum needs from Kenya's own resources.

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Agriculture has been the key to what prosperity Kenya has enjoyed. Exports of sisal, tea, and coffee have earned most of Kenya's foreign exchange. European farmers, despite a substantial exodus just before and after independence, still provide 80 percent of the country's agricultural exports.

The breakup of large European farms by the government has diminished over-all production. In 1965 a drought caused further losses, and Kenya also suffered from falling world prices for its cash crops. In order to feed its own people the government has been importing large quantities of corn, mostly from the US.

The government land resettlement program has only partially satisfied land hunger among the Africans, especially the Kikuyu. The settlement of 165,000 people on some two million acres of land bought from Europeans barely scratches the surface. Kenyatta's administration is expanding its efforts to instruct Africans in profitable farming practices. Kenyatta now favors the development of new lands for the Africans rather than taking over efficiently managed farms from Europeans.

Kenya's high (three percent) annual rate of population growth is constantly adding to the numbers of landless unemployed. Nearly one sixth of the largely unskilled African labor force is unemployed. Their ranks will be swelled this year as 150,000 children leave primary school

with places for only 20,000 in secondary schools. Through the US-assisted National Youth Service the government is training and employing thousands of young Kenyans on roadbuilding and other national development projects.

The expansion of investment and manufacturing provides some hope. Under Kenyatta's moderate leadership economic confidence has grown. Last year the migration pattern for Europeans was reversed, with the number arriving in Kenya exceeding the number leaving. The exchange controls introduced last June reduced capital outflow. Improved prospects for political stability may help the economic picture further.

Disruption of Kenya's economic union with Tanzania and Uganda may aggravate the country's chronic balance of payments problem, however. These two countries together purchase over 25 percent of Kenya's manufactured goods. Last year Tanzania unilaterally imposed restrictions on this trade. The East African common market and financial ties will be further disrupted this summer when Tanzania's new central bank issues its own currency.

Another source of discontent is the slow pace of Africanization of the security forces. Within the army, small navy, and fledgling air force, the top command as well as administration and technical functions remain in British hands. In the police, European officers

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retain essential command functions. The British training missions are preparing Africans for command but the changeover anticipated in 1966 is not now expected before next year. Kenyatta and his inner circle made this policy decision largely to avoid a decline in efficiency at a critical political time. Many Africans believe that Kenyatta is postponing the appointment of an African commander until a Kikuyu is trained for the job.

Kenyatta has in fact favored the Kikuyu in promotions to key positions in the police and army. New recruits have also included proportionately more Kikuyu to redress the present preponderance of Kamba. This has caused grumblings of discontent among many of the Kamba officers but to date the extremists appear to have had little success in exploiting it. Both the army and police will probably continue to be apolitical as long as both Kenyatta and the British are present. More than 200 Kenyans have returned from unofficial military training in Communist countries, but government policy has prevented all of them except a few Kikuyus from entering the services at any level.

Among younger elements who are Kenyatta supporters in government and Parliament, there are growing signs of frustration with scandal, corruption, and opportunism in the government. They fear that the obvious affluence of many ministers in contrast to the bare subsistence standards of their constituents is likely

to be an important factor in the 1968 elections. Many were impatient with Kenyatta's tactics in dealing with Odinga's covert political maneuvers and his failure to grapple vigorously with the country's problems. Most importantly, some of the most able believe that Kenyatta has no clear concept of economic development.

Leadership Problems

Young, nation-minded elements also resent Kenyatta's increasing dependence on the advice of his Kikuyu inner circle. All major policy decisions are made at this level. The fastest rising star is Attorney General Charles Njonjo, an appointed official. He is currently in the public eye more than any other member of the circle, and has become Kenyatta's principal confidant, adviser, trouble-shooter, and right-hand man. He is the Europeanized African par excellence, however, and probably lacks appeal to the typical Kenyan voter.

The 51-year-old finance minister, James Gichuru, is also notably intelligent and able. Once Kenyatta's choice as his understudy and probable successor, he has declined somewhat in the President's favor in the past year, and lacks a political base or strong personal ambitions. Defense Minister Mungai, another key figure, is generally unpopular with the rest of the cabinet--including Njonjo, who sees him as a Kikuyu rival for Kenyatta's favor--and with many

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of the active young moderates. A white Kenyan, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Bruce McKenzie, is another of the President's closest advisers. The one non-Kikuyu African who has recently gained Kenyatta's confidence is Daniel arap Moi. As minister of interior since last December he has rapidly made a reputation as a tough, capable administrator.

With the problem of succession unresolved, the moderates could fragment along tribal lines if Kenyatta should die before he has groomed an heir. Despite his approximate 75 years of age, Kenyatta appears vigorous, confident, and alert and shows every intention of remaining in office for the foreseeable future. Apparently, he prefers not to think about Kenya without Kenyatta. By appointing Foreign Minister Muringi, a Goan/Masai with no tribal backing, as the new vice president, a largely ceremonial post, he has avoided showing any preference for his successor.

No Kenyan politician possesses Kenyatta's charisma or his ability to dominate and reconcile the nation's conflicting forces. Any speculation necessarily begins with the Kikuyu contenders, including Gichuru, Mungai, and Njonjo. Individually they have their limitations and lack solid Kikuyu backing, but collectively

they would not willingly allow any other tribe to get the presidency. If the Kikuyu should fail to agree on one of their own, it is conceivable that agreement could be reached on a compromise choice: Interior Minister Moi, Mboya, or Ronald Ngala, the newly appointed minister of cooperatives and social services and the leader of a former opposition party now submerged in KANU. Mboya will always be an ambitious contender, but is the most controversial and disliked among his fellow politicians who are envious of his abilities. He may feel he can afford to remain a formidable influence in any successor administration and wait for a later term himself.

Because the moderate alliance is intertribal, it would have a hard time uniting behind one candidate unless it was simply a compromise to block Odinga. The longer Odinga remains outside the government, however, without the prestige and patronage of office, the dimmer his threat will appear.

Outlook

Whether focusing on Odinga or some new figure, Communist subversion will likely remain a factor in Kenya's turbulent politics.

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Kenyatta and his moderate alliance will remain under constant pressure, however well they have used their prestige and authority against Odinga.

They will hear continuing charges that they have made Kenya a stooge of the US and Britain, and may find attention turning increasingly to the country's economic and social problems. Young KANU leaders, in particular, unless they see greater astuteness among government officials than they have seen in the past, will be vulnerable to the lures of an Odinga by another name.

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